

If you watch an awards ceremony, you will notice that it is customary for the person receiving the award to credit certain other people with helping them attain their success. Maybe they thank their parents, or their wife, or the producers, or whomever, and thus honor them by mentioning their names during the ceremony. In this way, the person receiving the award reveals that he realizes that he is not solely responsible for what he has done, but it reflects upon many other people as well. In a similar way, Jesus shows us that He did not come to this earth only so that He might be glorified. Instead, He wants everything which He does to give glory and honor to the One Who sent Him. So He prays, **Father, Glorify Your Name!** In answer to this prayer, God says His name is glorified through Jesus' obedience, as well as through Jesus' victory.

Jesus had just been speaking to His disciples about His approaching suffering and death. Since He is omniscient, He knew everything that He was going to have to endure. So He says, **“Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ No, for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!”** (v27f) The thought of what He was going to have to suffer filled Jesus' heart with dread. He said that His heart was troubled at the very thought of it. He would have preferred another way. This is very similar to the feeling He had in the garden of Gethsemane. At that time He prayed that if it were possible for the salvation of mankind to be accomplished in another way — He would prefer that to the suffering He was about to go through.

It is fitting for us to consider this point as we go through this season of Lent. The joy that fills our hearts from knowing that Jesus loved us so much that He willingly laid down His life on the cross tends to make us forget what suffering our sins really caused our Savior. All too frequently we do not consider how serious our sins are in God's sight. We tend to minimize them by quickly asserting that Jesus died to forgive all of them. That is true, but that does not mean that our sins are not serious. Only when we remember the dread that filled Jesus' heart even at the thought of His suffering and death, only when we remember the agony which He endured in our place, will we rightly view how serious the Lord considers our sins.

Jesus would have preferred not having to lay down His life on the cross. If there would have been an easier way, He would have chosen it. But since this was God's plan for the salvation of all men, Jesus willingly submitted. He did not ask to be saved from having to be crucified, for He stated that it was for that very purpose for which He had come into this world. Even in the garden of Gethsemane, He prayed, *Not my will, but yours be done.* Instead of asking to be delivered from having to suffer and die, Jesus asked that God's name be glorified—glorified in all that He did in obedience to His Father's will.

In a miraculous way, God answered this prayer of Jesus. **“Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.’”** (v28) A voice from heaven spoke directly to Jesus on this occasion saying that God had glorified His name in many ways in the past, and that He would continue to glorify it in the future. Whenever God was true to His promises in caring for His people, whenever He rescued them from the trouble which they had gotten themselves into, His name was glorified. In fact, His name was glorified when He sent Jesus into this world. And it would be glorified shortly as Jesus saved all people through His suffering and death on the cross. So by speaking directly to Jesus on this occasion, God was again putting His stamp of approval on Jesus' work.

But not everyone who heard this agreed on what had happened. **“The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.”** (v29) Everyone agreed on one thing—they all heard something. But what they heard, they did not agree on. Some may not have understood what was said, and sought a natural explanation for it by saying that it had thundered. In the arid climate of Palestine, even that would have been out of the ordinary. Others, whether they understood the words or not, sought a different solution by saying that an angel spoke to Him.

So Jesus commented on what they heard: **“This voice was for your benefit, not mine.”** (v30) Jesus knew that His prayers were heard and answered. So this message from the Lord was more for the people who were there, that they would know that God was putting His stamp of approval on the work which Jesus was doing. We are not to doubt that the work which Jesus accomplished with both His life and death was done so that God the Father would be glorified. And God was pleased with Jesus’ obedience.

Yet the greatest way that Jesus glorified His Father’s name was through the victory over sin, death and hell which He won for all mankind. It is through Jesus’ passion by which He brought this about. Through that same passion, Jesus displayed for all to see the glorious splendor of God’s attributes of love and forgiveness. For through His suffering and death, Satan was defeated just as God had prophesied in the garden of Eden. Jesus went on to say: **“Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.”** Jesus says that His death and resurrection provide for the basis on which all judgment will be based. Jesus did not come to take life away, but rather to give life to all. But many reject the way that He provided life for them. They decide they want to gain life their own way instead of His way. So whether they look to what He has done for them or not is the only basis on which all people will be judged. Satan’s power had been defeated. He is now under restraints. He can go so far and no further. So let us remain in the safety of our Savior’s loving arms, and do not be so bold as to try to fight the devil on his terms in his territory. The real judgment of which Jesus is speaking only falls on those who reject Him and desire to continue following Satan.

Along with the defeat of Satan’s power, Jesus also has won the positive side of the victory by bringing salvation. Jesus said, **“But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw near all men to myself.”** (v32) By being lifted up on the cross, Jesus was able to atone for the sins of all mankind. By doing that, He is able to draw all men to Himself in the eternal mansions of heaven. This reward is granted to all who believe. This is the message He wants us to be proclaiming to all men everywhere. For as more people are brought into His kingdom, the Father’s name is glorified more and more. In other words, God is glorified by the many people who look to Him alone for the forgiveness of all of their sins, for that magnifies His love and forgiveness through Jesus.

When presented with an honor, even men are inclined to share that honor with others who had helped them to achieve it. But with Jesus it is much different, for everything which He did, in coming into this world and laying down His life so that He could draw all men to Him, this was all done so that the Father’s name would be glorified. Jesus truly wants all men to come to know the tremendous love and forgiveness of the Father, and how in His mercy He wants all men to be saved. That is why He sent Jesus into this world. And His name is glorified whenever anyone looks to Him in faith. So may we also glorify Him by accepting all the gifts which He is offering to us.